

keep himself unspotted from the world. James 1:27.

Note first the point of view. "Before God." The apostle is speaking of religion as the Father looks at it. Our conceptions may be different. We may look upon religion as the embodiment of a certain creed, a formula of doctrines, a system of ordinances. These are merely the house in which religion lives. True religion is a *life*, a saved, pure, godly, benevolent life. That is the meaning of our quotation. God does not look at the creed, and call that "pure and undefiled." Anybody may assent to a creed. He doesn't look upon the ceremonial of the church, and call that "pure and undefiled religion," for anyone may practice the ceremonial of the church. But he looks at the life, and the logic of his point of view is this: A man who "keeps himself unspotted from the world, a man who lends himself to the service of the sorrowing and the unfortunate, has the "pure and undefiled religion." A sinner cannot answer this description. An insincere man, a hypocrite, a fraud, cannot measure up to this standard. The apostle was speaking of religion in view of its mature fruits. A *life* of obedience, rather than a *season* of obedience, furnishes the complete evidence, for while the obedient life always includes the obedient season, we cannot say that vice versa is true. Not in a few things but in all things conformed to the divine ideal and obedient to the divine will constitutes the religion which God approves.

#### The Preacher's Rest

Perhaps the most delightful sensation of the earnest, faithful preacher, comes at the end of a Sabbath's labor. Morning and evening he has held forth the Word of Life to his people. He has freely given of himself, his best, highest, noblest self, that others might be blessed. He has delivered the message of his Master. He has held aside the portals of eternity, that men and women might look into the invisible, which is the real, world. He has comforted the sorrowing, strengthened the weak, cheered the discouraged, guided the blind, heartened the hopeless. Sublime service. Others serve themselves, but he serves others, and thus serves God. It has not been eye service, for he warned faithfully, instructed patiently. It has not been a service for money, because there can be no price put upon the priceless. Unselfish, a service of love, a service filled with yearning for souls, ennobled by the loftiness of its purpose, made sublime by the eternity with which it is concerned, desolating the empire of death and peopling the empire of life; godlike in its thought, its aspiration, its destiny. Now it is night, and the work is well done, not done as it merits, for "who is sufficient for these things," but done to the limit of ability and strength, and

the servant of God rests. A sweet peace comes into his soul. The benediction of heaven rests upon his spirit. Watering others, himself has been refreshed; comforting others, his own comfort abounds; instructing others, his own measure of knowledge is enlarged; making others rich, his own spirit has been made opulent. He goes to his couch in peace. God rests him. "He giveth his beloved sleep."

### Brief Notes

Lest love be choked, choke down the hasty word; Far better be it hushed than be it heard.

It is said that the trusts have gobbled up pretty much everything but air. If they were wisely discriminating in their restrictions, it might be a good idea for them to corner the wind too. Some congregations would be even thankful.

Professor Koch has gone on an expedition to tropical countries to continue his investigations concerning the source of malaria. He still adheres to his statement that the mosquito communicates the germ, which shows that the insect is not so harmless as he was supposed to be. Insectile self indulgences are often more serious in their ultimate consequences than we either imagine or wish to believe.

A bill has been introduced in the New York legislature to restrict the selling of liquor to the saloons. It looks as if they might be able to attend to it. We haven't heard of any of them complaining of over work. Now if the law makers would take the next step and restrict the saloons to the penitentiary, we might be persuaded that civilization had dawned.

Rival factions of a great political party are to hold banquets in New York, one to cost ten dollars a plate, and the other and more democratic one to cost one dollar a plate. Dissensions of this kind are the symptoms of that moral defeat which always precedes the material. A heavenly banquet will be the symbol of final victory, but there will be no factions there, no ten dollar tables and one dollar tables in hostile rivalry.

Sirdar Kitchener of Egypt has demolished the tomb of the Mahdi and scattered his ashes, so that there will in the future be no fanatical pilgrimages to make trouble for his government. If all the miseries brought upon mankind by the annual pilgrimages of fanatical Mohammedans to the tomb of Mahomet at Mecca were written, in the language of St. John we suppose the world itself would hardly contain the books. Lord Kitchener has done a wise thing, and possibly put limits to the mischief which one dead bad man might work.

The German government is still at work increasing her "peace footing" which means the addition of many thousands of soldiers to her already huge army. There will be another kind of "footing" some day when the nations as well as responsible individuals will have to give account for the wickedness of war.

At a wedding in an Austrian village a tree which was being felled by some workmen fell on the procession killing seven persons. A startling and mournful tragedy like this serves to illustrate how quickly moral blindness and carelessness may transform the insecure joy of the world into tragedy and tears. Wisdom looks out for the dangerous paths and the falling trees.

Electricity was recently used successfully to ferret out a number of boy thieves who had hidden themselves among the debris of an immense car shed. It illustrates that awful, invisible Eye, which can see into the dark recesses of sin's hiding places, and one day will certainly expose the sinner. Of all fools, the transgressor of God's laws who imagines that he will never be found out is chief.

Blank cartridges and makeshift sermons make plenty of noise, but the enemy doesn't mind that.

A patent medicine trust has just been organized in Chicago. Last week a coffin trust was organized in New York, and the two things put together looks very much like a grave conspiracy.

The government will not allow the Chinese sailors who fought bravely with Dewey to enter the United States, such a permission being prohibited by the Chinese exclusion act. But there will be no exclusion law in the "Everlasting Kingdom" against brave soldiers of the cross, whatever their nationality may be.

A flock of Dorset sheep, armed with long sharp horns killed a fox which entered the fold to get the lambs. A far worse, more to be dreaded, more cunning enemy is constantly seeking to devour the lambs of the spiritual flock. Let Christians, Sunday school teachers, pastors, and particularly parents be more watchful, more on their guard, more efficiently armed to resist these treacherous designs of the enemy of souls.

A Greek philosopher, Papadakis by name, denies that the earth revolves around the sun, or around its own axis, and offers \$500.00 for proof to the contrary. We have no doubt he will keep his money, not because the evidence is lacking, but because of his unwillingness to be convinced. It is thus in religious matters. The greatest obstacle to the progress of Christianity is not the lack of evidence in its favor, but the inveterate unwillingness of the natural man to be convinced. This is the flint against which the sermon has to hammer.

The Dupont powder mills of New Jersey were blown up last week killing and wounding a number of employees. We have often wondered how anyone could be found willing to work in these dangerous establishments. Nevertheless there are others still more perilous, the saloon, the gambling den, the theater, and yet people are plentiful who are willing to work in them.

A controversy is on foot in Southern Presbyterian circles concerning the word in, or into, in the baptismal formula. Some of the preachers are opposed to the retention of the right word, "into," for the reason that it appears to lean toward immersion. What a relief it would be to several large denominations to find another and an older version of the scriptures in some Egyptian sand bank with all the water evaporated out of it. But the trouble lies in a different quarter; they are not *willing* to go down into the water.

A New York preacher has issued new regulations which require women to remove their hats in church. We warn him that he is probably setting his colter a little too deep. Our German Baptist Brethren are well known experts at the job of eliminating ladies' hats, and they often wish that they could get something easy to do.

It is said that the disastrous fire in the Windsor Hotel, New York, which occurred last week was caused by one of the guests who lighted his cigar with a match and carelessly flung the burning brand among some lace curtains. That was mischief enough for one cigar to make.

The papers state that many of the guests who perished in the disastrous hotel fire were those who failed to heed the first warning, failed to rush immediately for the stairways and fire escapes, but remained for a few moments in their rooms to collect their valuables, their diamonds, rich dresses, money bags, and such like plunder. Everybody exclaims, "What folly," but how many are there who are pursuing the same course in spiritual matters, neglecting the warnings of that "devouring fire" which is kindling to consume the ungodly, and making frantic efforts to save the rubbish of the world. They inevitably perish and it is all the more sad because they might have been saved. Heed the warnings of the gospel, and he that is upon the housetop, let him not tarry even to snatch his garment.